

Steens Mountain Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

May 8 and 9, 2003

Members Present:

Hoyt Wilson, Grazing Permittee, Princeton, Oregon
Jerry Sutherland, Vice Chair, Environmental Representative – Statewide,
Portland, Oregon
Tom Harris, Chair, Mechanized or Consumptive Recreation, Keno, Oregon
Alice Elshoff, Environmental Representative – Local, Frenchglen, Oregon
Wanda Johnson, Burns Paiute Tribe, Burns, Oregon
Cynthia Witzel, Recreation Permit Holder, Frenchglen, Oregon
Mike Golden, Dispersed Recreation, Redmond, Oregon
Stacy Davies, Grazing Permittee, Frenchglen, Oregon
Harland Yriarte, Private Landowner, Eugene Oregon
E. Ron Harding, Wild Horse Management, Hines, Oregon
Jason Miner, Fish and Recreation Fishing, Portland, Oregon

Members Absent:

Richard Benner, No Financial Interest, Portland, Oregon
Steve Purchase, State Liaison, Salem, Oregon

Designated Federal Official (DFO):

Tom Dyer, Burns District Manager, Bureau of Land Management
(BLM), Hines, Oregon

Designated Federal Official Assistants:

Rhonda Karges, Management Support Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Liz Appelman, Budget Analyst, BLM, Hines, Oregon

Presenters:

Gary Foulkes, District Planning & Environmental Coordinator, BLM, Hines, OR
John Neeling, Wilderness Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Mark Sherbourne, Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Evelyn Treiman, Outdoor Recreation Planner, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Richard DeLong, Enviroscientists, Inc., Reno, Nevada
Rick Hall, Natural Resource Specialist, BLM, Hines, Oregon
Lee McConnell, Range Rider, BLM, Hines, Oregon

Facilitator:

Dale White

Commenting Public:

Susie Hammond, Hammond Ranches, Inc.
Steve Hammond, Community Club & Oregon Farm Bureau
Richard Day, Community Response Team
Albert Teeman, Burns Paiute Tribe
Laurie O'Conner, Backcountry Horsemen, Steens Chapter
Jim Bishop, Backcountry Horsemen, Steens Chapter
Colby Marshall, Congressman Greg Walden's Office

Others Present:

Kathy Harris, Public Affairs Officer, BLM, Oregon State Office
Pam Hardy, University of Oregon
Beth Coahran, Burns Paiute Tribe
Josh Warburton, Steens Mountain Resort
John O'Conner, Backcountry Horsemen, Steens Chapter
Carolyn Freeborn, BLM
Bill Anderson, BLM
Sandy Berain, BLM
Joan Suther, BLM
Tara Wilson, BLM
Kelly Hazen, BLM
Patti Wilson, BLM
Scott Hamilton, BLM
Cam Swisher, BLM

Welcome, Introductions, Housekeeping and Agenda:

The meeting was called to order, introductions made, and the agenda reviewed. Stacy informed the Council he would be absent May 9, and Wanda stated she would be absent for a few hours to attend a funeral on Friday.

Chairman Update:

Tom Harris reminded members to review the draft minutes and action items for tomorrow.

DFO Update:

Tom Dyer informed the Council:

- His presence was due to Karla being in the midst of moving here as well as a family medical emergency.
- Mark Armstrong had a valve repair on his heart, and is doing great.
- Jon Collins was on leave for medical concerns.
- The settlement effects in Utah referring to WSAs and new proposals coming in associated with planning actions.
- His work on a BLM team to develop strategies to meet BLM's commitment to manage Herd Management Areas within the Appropriate Management Level and the funding and methods available to do that.

- The Burns District is working with the Otley's to see if a cooperative management agreement can be reached to construct the Kiger Fence.

Colby Marshall stated Congressman Walden is paying close attention to what is happening with the Steens and is working hard on the issues connected to it.

RMP Update – Preliminary Draft:

Gary Foulkes complimented members on the work accomplished at the last meeting. That work enabled a great deal of progress to be done on the central sections of document. He reported some revamping on parts of the document is occurring due to BLM State Office staff comments. Local staff is diligently working to complete their assigned sections.

Council members looked at the table entitled “Comparison Summary of Resource Impacts by Alternative” and discussed their concerns.

Council members discussed the importance of providing good maps with the document and the difference in number of maps between this draft and the AMS.

Motion made and seconded, SMAC recommend those maps the BLM staff feels are appropriate be included as color maps in the RMP (Harland moved and Mike seconded).

Discussion: Members discussed several options available including perhaps narrowing down the number of maps, asking people to write BLM if they wanted the maps, making them available on the web, and providing a CD.

Objection to the motion was heard, but was withdrawn after a clarification.

Consensus Decision: Recommend those maps the BLM staff feels are appropriate be included as color maps in the RMP.

Gary informed the SMAC the next couple of months will be spent incorporating comments into the RMP that have been received to date. From this he will develop the socio/economic section. Tom Dyer reiterated the preliminary draft went out to cooperating agencies, BLM's State Office, SMAC and RAC which provided an opportunity for comment prior to the draft. Gary asked that Rich DeLong, RMP contractor, be allowed to help John Neeling with the next presentation to the SMAC. No objection was heard.

Wilderness Management Plan:

John explained the goals, objectives and monitoring systems. He reiterated the text is not yet updated, so the table is the only part that is current.

SMAC expressed concern with who is doing campsite ratings and how they are accomplishing it. Some members of SMAC asked to receive a copy of the monitoring methods and data accumulated. Members discussed how to address this section of the RMP and whether or not to follow what had been previously established.

Various members expressed concerns and suggestions for deciding what basis is used to determine what a campsite consists of, whether or not periodic usage should be considered, on a one-year baseline gathering versus a 4- or 5-year period; and the possible designation of one area as high and another as low depending on known, current use and possible impacts.

Goal 1, Objective 1. 1A - No changes

Goal 1, Objective 1. 2A

Discussion: Concern was raised as to where does historic use fit in; how to support historic use under the provisions as described in the Act; where do marks on the land come into the determination (i.e. are fire rings and meat poles a campsite?); and the Council should be encouraging the Leave No Trace ethics rather than limiting use because of it. Council members also expressed there are a wide variety of things that need to be taken into consideration when evaluating camping impacts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Steven Hammond, expressed concern that not all information was being passed on to the SMAC, BLM was controlling the information, and only giving the Council what they (BLM) deemed appropriate. His concern encompassed the fact the SMAC is meeting under BLM's roof. The Council is a pretty diverse group of people capable of making up their own minds and coming to their decisions, but he doesn't think all the necessary information is being given to SMAC. He stated there had been letters sent to Tom Dyer, but they hadn't been forwarded to SMAC as was intended by the author. He reiterated he felt it was at BLM's discretion as to what the SMAC did or did not see. He also stated he had called BLM and requested the minutes from the previous meeting. He had been unable to obtain them, and felt that when someone controls the minutes, they control the group.

Tom Dyer stated if someone wishes a letter to go to the SMAC, they should state in the letter. It is not always possible for BLM to know from what is written that this was the intention, and there are also FOIA issues involved.

Albert Teeman, read a letter to the Council as Chair of Burns Paiute Tribe (see attached document for full content).

Laurie O'Connor, a resident of Double O Valley, stated she and her husband and family have been taking horses into the Steens Mountain area for the last 14 years

for recreation use and are looking forward to continuing. They became involved about a year ago in an organization called Backcountry Horseman. Since that time, she has become alarmed at how alert the common citizen must be to legislative action in order to protect their rights to use public lands. Mrs. O'Connor, speaking for the local chapter, quoted a letter written by Dan Applebaker and received by the BLM and Congressman Walden about a year ago. She has summarized it as placing an importance on the educating of users of the back country, horse use is appropriate in the back country, and there is no need to react to extremists. She stated establishing accurate baseline is critical to establishing what kind of use. Agencies must provide for all uses in such a manner that preserves wilderness character and Steens Act states the same. It would be premature to propose limits on recreation use until baseline is established and monitored to find out if impacts are occurring. One recreational use should not be used to limit another, each should be dealt with proportionately and individually. She felt the pack in feed initiative stems from a lot of people with right intentions but the wrong information. Pack in feed will have a much greater impact because it requires a larger number of animals and a concentrated picketing area where conversely free grazing or lightly tethered will have much less impact. She felt the standards should be similar to those enforced by the Forest Service and a minimum of 5 years should be taken to establish baseline data.

Jim Bishop, member of Backcountry Horsemen, born and raised in Bend and had his first camping experience on Steens 50 years ago and spent good part of it in the wilderness area. He's seen probably three people maximum on any one trip. Jim saw Three Sisters go from not being used to almost flooded with people and feels it is imperative the planning be done now to create appropriate trail heads and do it right.

Steve Hammond, Oregon Farm Bureau Federation, stated there was a letter that hadn't been given to the SMAC and perhaps they needed to file a FOIA in order to obtain it. He used some analogies when addressing the Council during the Frenchglen meeting and reiterated those concerning the need to deal with culls in any setting. Steve also used an analogy with the way children learn and the members of the Council learn. He believes the group is approaching the level of stupidity in what they are considering. He admonished the group that they know what it takes to protect the Steens and they are not doing it.

Colby Marshall, from Congressman Walden's office, said the Congressman had asked him to attend today to reiterate his appreciation of the hard work and effort the SMAC puts into fully implementing the Act, as well as thank the BLM staff who put in an incredible amount of effort to ensure the Act is implemented as intended. He is working on the components of the legislation that have not been funded to this point and trying to obtain funds at the authorization levels in the Act. Colby reported Congressman Walden also cosponsored a noxious weed bill which will translate dollars to an agency to help combat that scourge.

Mike Golden, stated he had given copies of a letter from Dan Applebaker to all SMAC members (see attached).

Followup Action: Rhonda will provide a copy of the Oregon Farm Bureau letter to SMAC.

Clarifications:

Tom Dyer asked to clarify what he heard during public comment and wanted it on the record. If correspondence comes in from the Hammonds to the BLM, it is available to this group. Susie Hammond responded she believed Steven was speaking of anything that comes into BLM that refers to Andrews Resource Area. Since we have decided to put Andrews and CMPA into the same planning document, those letters written to Andrews ought to come before this planning committee. Tom stated as long as that is the understanding, he doesn't have to go under FOIA and as such the correspondence is open to the public. Tom reiterated that he wants it clear anything that the Ranch writes regarding Andrews or Steens will be available to the public and this group.

Tom Dyer also asked the Council to verify their recommendation that the minutes are not available to anyone until they are approved by the Council as a group. Council members agreed this was the process.

Wilderness:

Discussion: Jerry stated a need to have time to review the wilderness documents that were just distributed.

Goal 1, Objective 1, Action 2

Discussion: Council members discussed how long it would take to get the baseline data, and how best to obtain that information. It was also believed the order of Actions 2 and 3 should be switched.

Motion made and seconded to recommend to BLM that within two years they accomplish the establishment of baseline (Cindy moved and Wanda seconded).

No objection heard to the motion.

Consensus Decision: Recommend to BLM that within two years they accomplish the establishment of baseline.

Discussion occurred after baseline is established then it would take three years to be evaluated before any of the different action levels would go into affect; the need to treat the gorges different than the country outside of them; concerns with requiring pellet feed, packing feed and number of people and livestock allowed at any one time; what kind of increase in visitation would trigger the other levels; what party size will allow a viable economic operation; and what impact the number of people has on solitude.

Motion made and seconded to recommend the party size limit within the gorges be 10 people with 15 livestock and pending other public input could be a different number but not less than that (Cindy moved and Tom seconded).

Discussion: The question was asked what gorges would be included in the motion and where exactly do the gorges begin and end. The group size limit would be in the gorges with the remaining CMPA open.

Cindy withdrew her motion, Tom agreed.

Motion made and seconded that outside the gorges there be no limit on party size until monitoring shows different (Stacy moved and Mike second).

Discussion: BLM would identify the gorges as they best fit within the motion.

Objection to the motion was heard (Jerry).

Roll Call Vote: Tom Harris - Yes; Jerry - No; Wanda - Yes; Cindy - Yes; Stacy - Yes; Mike - Yes; Jason - No; E. Ron - Yes; Alice - No; Hoyt - Yes, Harland - Yes.

Motion failed due to lack of votes.

Motion made that there be no limit on party size until monitoring shows different (Jason Moved).

It was explained previous to this, the Council had been using the procedure that if one person objected to a motion concerning the RMP Actions, they would move onto the next issue.

Jason withdrew the motion.

Landowner Access:

Mark Sherbourne updated the Council on the status of the inholder EA. He informed the SMAC of the fact it had been changed to cover only the Stroemple and Ellis inholdings (4 total) because of the difficulty of trying to fit all the inholdings in one EA and delays in getting information from the other inholders.

Mark described the various alternatives for the EA and the routes being analyzed. Mark hopes to have public comment open during mid-June.

Council discussed the alternatives and the drawbacks to some of them such as involved private land, no cooperative management agreement even mentioned in the document, agreement is not even in this document, how any necessary maintenance would be accomplished, what access right-of-ways might be necessary, and impacts of using roads bordering wilderness. Mark will be issuing a preliminary plan to landowners by the first of June, with a one-week turnaround. After that, it will be open to the public for comment.

Camping:

Evelyn and Rick were present to discuss the issue raised at a previous meeting concerning camping in the RNAs. Rick stated camping is mentioned as a specific use deemed incompatible with RNAs. Rick also stated camping had taken place within the RNA/ACECs for many years because it is a difficult regulation to enforce.

Followup Action: Give copies of management plans for Little Blitzen, Wild Horse and Rooster Comb RNAs to the Council.

Council discussed the available means to enforce this regulation including trailhead notification, ranger contact, special recreation permit stipulations, and signs along trails entering RNAs saying “no camping.” The question was raised, since to date no issues have developed from the camping that has occurred, couldn’t mitigation measures be implemented in order to minimize any impacts (i.e., a requirement to carry out human waste in the high elevation RNAs.), thereby still allowing the use. The other question raised was since this is a historical use and the Act provides for that, how can a restriction on camping be justified?

Special Recreation Permit EA Update:

Evelyn reported the six EAs are in final editing right now, and will be emailed to the SMAC when completed. They will be available to the public and on the web site by next Wednesday.

High elevation camping

Council continued discussion on the concern of impacts from high altitude camping areas, including those outside wilderness. Discussions centered on camping not be limited to designated areas; how to maximize dispersed recreation; historic use has occurred throughout the Mountain and the Act calls for continued historic use; if trails and campsites are designated, this changes the historical patterns; the current proposals are business as usual rather than new innovative means; viewshed issues can exist with campsite locations; not imposing regulations until monitoring shows a need; education for the public of

appropriate camping areas; and the possibility of leaving the entire CMPA open to camping unless environmental conditions dictate a change. It was discussed the higher elevations are most likely self limiting due to thunderstorms, climate and terrain. Members also discussed whether or not the monitoring should be based on number of people or impacts to resources or a combination of both.

Motion made and seconded to leave the whole CMPA open to camping unless environmental conditions are such a change must be made (Hoyt made and Harland seconded).

Discussion: Council discussed what the motion included such as RNAs. Concern was expressed that it was too broad a motion.

Objection was heard.

Roll Call Vote: Tom Harris – No; Wanda – No; Cindy – Yes; Stacy – Yes; Mike – No ; Jason -Yes; E. Ron - Yes; Alice – No; Hoyt – Yes; Harland – Yes; Jerry – No.

Motion failed for lack of affirmative votes.

Tom Dyer will take the information from the above discussion to staff and let them work on the details.

May 9, 2003

The meeting was called to order and introductions made.

All present same as yesterday, with one exception: Stacy Davies was absent.

Review and Approve April Minutes:

Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes as corrected (Mike moved and Jerry seconded).

Discussion: A couple more modifications were made. Also discussed was the amount of detail in the minutes for the public comment period. Most members felt the Public Comment section should remain as detailed as it was, although asked that any speakers be encouraged to also have written testimony that could be attached to the minutes.

Consensus Decision: Approve the minutes as corrected.

SMAC Action Items Review:

Members quickly reviewed the list and updated it as necessary.

Tom Dyer expressed his appreciation of Liz Appelman's abilities and work for the SMAC. Members concurred.

Q&A from Previous Day:

Wilderness Resumed: Rich DeLong and John Neeling asked for followup on some of the direction the Council gave yesterday to ensure they understood the group's wishes which included:

- Do not want a rigid plan that is highly structured and highly specific in all areas of the wilderness.
- Want to have a stepped approach. If resource damage is identified, increased measures are implemented as appropriate to protect the wilderness values.

Monitoring will be done for certain types of data, with that comes standards such as campsite condition, campsite density, crowding or solitude. The questions are: how will this data be applied in the future; will the entire CMPA be managed as one unit; or something different like the gorges as one way and the plateaus another.

Ideas and concerns raised included carrying capacity and how it would be determined; no where is it discussed about the geological condition and the affects it has on camping or camping on it; and mitigation measures should be implemented prior to restricting numbers.

Discussion ensued on how solitude would be looked at across the entire wilderness or some other scale, what parts of the Mountain where solitude could be easily impacted, what could impact the opportunity for solitude, the different events/holidays affecting number of visitors and how to monitor the effects of each. Cindy raised the concern that facility construction or improvement has a direct impact on solitude since either would increase the visitor use in those particular areas.

Council members discussed concerns with the impact some of the actions described in the table would have on the viability of recreation permit holder operations; the possibility of analyzing pelletized feed in other alternatives; what the base numbers should be; and how best to resolve these issues. Members felt there were basically three types of groups (outfitters/guides, large organized groups, and family groups) and what is the best way to meet the needs of these groups, while protecting the resources. Discussion also included whether or not a

number limit should be applied to any or all of these groups, what that would possibly be, and where they would be applied.

Motion made and seconded based upon resource concerns the BLM may establish maximum group size limits but not less than 12 people and 15 head of stock (Cindy moved and Hoyt seconded).

Discussion: Jerry would rather have a number that is recommended because there are limits in place right now; when the levels kick in, the number needs to be reduced as well as looking at resource concerns; that all the groups should be treated the same; and how best to ensure the number of a group did not go below that necessary to be a viable operation. Members discussed again that there were two areas, one inside the gorges and one outside of them.

Objection was heard to the motion.

The group decided each member should give their point of view:

Harland felt what he had heard and agreed with is the zone situation was a means to take a realistic look at the Mountain and identify the gorges are used more than the outer area. From that it would appear the gorges would have a different carrying capacity than the outside areas. It could have different group sizes depending on the time of the year. Situation on campsites - number of campsites, not totally in agreement, 14 sites here or 83 there is the approach that should be taken. There needs to be some flexibility with that based on a lot of different things. There are exceptions as well such as historical and Tribal use.

Jerry thought two zones are historically reflective to treat gorges different and there should be a limit on group size spread across alternatives being different. Alternative D could be 12 horses and 15 people along with other options with mitigation. He believes there needs to be an alternative that discusses heartbeats (people, dogs, horses). Perhaps Alternative B should have a limit of 15 heart beats; and Alternative C might have a larger heart beat number.

Mike is supportive of the gorges being different than the rest but there should be stringent limits that are the same for outfitters and public. The limits outside the gorges should be more flexible, unless or until monitoring proves a need for change.

Ron concurs with the more stringent limits in the gorges than outside. He agrees with Cindy's motion. When speaking about exceptions, there is still the necessity to examine possible impacts to resource damage for these as well.

Cindy stated pelletized feed is a huge issue. There is a need to be able to picket livestock but to also have loose stock.

Jason agrees with group size limits in gorges and more flexibility in the uplands. He would support 12 people and 15 livestock group size limit, but also expressed concern about how quickly resource damage could be identified and rectified. There is a need for exceptions for a variety of uses but one should certainly be the Burns Paiute Tribe.

Alice agreed with the two-area approach, and believes a range of group size limits spread through the alternatives is needed for future issues. She wants to see the outfitters' rights to make a living protected and an exception for the Tribal concerns.

Hoyt likes the two areas throughout the CMPA. He has no problem with limiting group size in wilderness and would make two exceptions to it, the Running Camp and Tribal use.

Tom Harris agrees with the difference in and outside gorges as well as being treated differently than the rest of the wilderness. He agrees with the numbers proposed in Cindy's motion.

Rich will take this information and return at the next meeting with text and table.

Project Implementation EA – fence removal:

John Neeling reported Stacy, Lee McConnell and he talked of how to take advantage of Roaring Springs' Offer to help haul things out of the area. They will be driving into the location until about mid-August and it is an opportunity to get some of the materials removed. Currently there is no money available for the fence removal projects and future funding is doubtful. The only means of accomplishing it is through volunteers as time and weather allows. SMAC suggested pursuing more volunteer efforts and perhaps stock piling it, if necessary, until such time as it can be removed. Funding should be actively pursued as well to accomplish the entire fence removal within the specified timeframes. Cindy suggested whatever is done should benefit the local economy through perhaps contracts. She also felt BLM should be setting an example when it comes to nonmotorized requirements. Ron felt it was imperative to get the fence removed as soon as possible because of the dangers that can occur for wild horses as well as wildlife and humans. Several members felt it was a good idea to go ahead and use mechanized means where previous routes existed, which would expedite the removal.

Jerry expressed some discontent with the BLM, since he had gone to a lot of work to provide suggestions on means of accomplishing the fence removal without vehicles and machinery and within the designated timeframe. He believes there are ways to get it done and has put them in writing and submitted them to the BLM and SMAC. Jerry felt wilderness cannot always be dealt with in a practical manner, and sometimes not even the most cost effective manner can be used. He felt it is a great opportunity to provide some benefit to local economy. He

included several options in the write up he gave the BLM. He stated when this implementation EA was being worked out, the timeline was important and he's unwilling to say, 4 years prior to the deadline, that it can't be done.

Motion made and seconded to write a letter to the Designated Federal Official to request funding be sought as immediate as possible and identify the money is for fence removal and nothing else (Mike moved and Alice seconded).

Discussion: Tom Dyer stated BLM had requested \$5,000 to \$10,000 each year, but have not necessarily received it.

No objection to the motion was heard.

Consensus Decision: Request the DFO to seek funding as immediate as possible and identify it as for fence removal only.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Susan Hammond, Hammond Ranches Inc., readdressed the discussion of correspondence received by the BLM from the Hammond Ranches. Although she is normally pretty public about most things, she doesn't feel it necessary for all correspondence from the Ranch or family to come before this Council. She said what brought it up were the letters Steven had referred to as not being brought before the committee - one from the Frenchglen Community Club and one from the Farm Bureau - both of which are pertinent to the discussion before this Council. She stated none of the correspondence Steven was addressing yesterday concerned Hammond Ranches.

Tom Dyer stated unless the correspondence specifically identifies it should be forwarded to SMAC it falls under the FOIA regulations. The BLM has included in the press releases that the correspondence either be carbon copied to the SMAC, addressed to the SMAC, or in some way identified that it should be forwarded. However, there is no guarantee those writing will do so, so the call is up to the BLM, and sometimes letters are missed.

Susie complimented Liz on the good job capturing the comments by the public and she feels it is important they remain detailed. Susie requested one correction be made to the minutes from the April 9, 10 and 11 meeting. On Page 10 it should read "...**there is no place in the process for cooperative management.**"

Richard Day, Community Response Team, presented the idea perhaps there is an economic value for people to get the wilderness experience. The means to accomplish it is to have people pay to go in and remove the fence. Have the fiddlers, a barbeque, a western theme that people would pay to see the Mountain and do the work, like they would do for a working ranch experience.

Pam Hardy thanked everyone for their time and patience in her interviews and she looks forward to talking more with people. She will be writing up her project shortly.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS:

Evelyn understood there were two issues raised at the last meeting both of which were related to the proposed recommendation to Congress to change part of the Wild river designation to a different category.

Council members discussed the road to Newton Cabin where it was intended to be closed and where it is closed. The concern with Blitzen Crossing area is the road is in a WSR corridor and has a bridge on it. With current standards that bridge could not be maintained or repaired. Members talked of the various types of designations and their associated restrictions, the importance of the bridge, and access available to the recreational fisherman as well as others.

Jerry pointed out a problem he perceived in the Council. When he pointed out what the understanding was at the negotiations, and it doesn't end up on the official map, and then people disregard what he says. He felt if both Bill Marlett and Stacy agreed it should be shut off at the wild and scenic boundary, then that is what should happen, but it is not his perception of what occurs here. Alice reported having checked with Bill and he agreed during the negotiations they agreed the road was to stop at the WSR boundary. Alice concurred with Jerry's statements.

Motion made and seconded that Alternative D be to recommend downgrading to scenic in both the Newton Cabin and Blitzen Crossing Areas (Jerry moved and Ron seconded).

Discussion: Members wondered if the designation had to be changed.

Jerry amended his motion to limit the proposed scenic designation to Blitzen Crossing only.

Ron Harding withdrew his second, Mike seconded the motion.

Motion restated as the action in Alternative D be to recommend downgrading that area of the WSR at Blitzen Crossing to scenic (Jerry moved and Mike seconded).

Objection was heard.

Discussion held and once clarified the objection was withdrawn.

No other objection heard.

Consensus Decision to support the action in Alternative D be to recommend that area of the WSR at Blitzen Crossing be changed to scenic.

Motion made and seconded the Newton Cabin area not be downgraded in the action items, but would stay as Wild (Jerry moved and Jason seconded).

Discussion: Members discussed if wild designation would still allow inholder access. Concerns stemmed from the possibility the road could wash out and would not be repaired. Evelyn explained that even with the overlapping designation it would be governed by the most restrictive, which in this case would be wilderness. Access would still be allowed to the river.

Consensus Decision: The Newton Cabin area would remain Wild.

Permittee Access EA Update:

John Neeling updated the council on the status of this EA. It is being revamped and ready for internal specialist review and gave them a brief summary of the alternatives. Once that is done and any comments are incorporated, it will be issued for public comment. Although the EA covers several permittees, there will be a separate decision record for each operator. Council members informed the BLM there was a lot of concern over these EAs and hope they will be out soon. Tom Dyer explained with staff shortages, timeframes have been delayed, but it is hoped to complete them in the near future.

Tom Dyer will visit with Karla as to the priorities and how best to meet them.

June Agenda

Council members discussed the agenda for the June meeting, whether or not to cancel the meeting, and the cost of any one meeting. Members talked of how to obtain a hand roller to be used in conjunction with fence removal, what kind of information would be available on the Wilderness section of the RMP, the need to develop a cooperative agreement process, their need for BLM to build a framework of what they wish the SMAC's input on; juniper management/fire management; field trips; and the socio/economic section of the RMP

Motion made and seconded to cancel the June meeting (Mike moved and Wanda seconded).

Discussion: Members felt there were some things that had to be addressed in June. Tom Dyer stated the money saved from a meeting could go toward the fence removal issues.

Mike withdrew motion and Wanda agreed.

Motion made and seconded to cancel the August meeting (Mike moved and Wanda seconded).

No objection to motion heard.

Consensus Decision: Cancel the August meeting.

Motion made and seconded the savings from that meeting go toward fence removal (Jason moved and Tom Harris seconded).

No objections heard.

Consensus Decision: Instruct BLM to use the money saved from the August meeting to implement fence removal in the wilderness.

Everyone agreed it is their understanding whatever events they participate in during August is out of their own pocket, BLM is not obligated to pay them in any way.

Also discussed for the agenda were the monitoring procedures planned for this year to establish recreation wilderness baseline data; and asking Dick back to layout the County's socio economic concerns.

Members did a round table to assess how they felt the Council itself and the meetings were progressing. Most felt it was going well, acknowledging it can be very frustrating, but a great deal of progress has been made. It was suggested perhaps an emphasis on meeting preparation might make the meetings flow a little easier, and it might be a good thing if Dale were a little tougher on the rabbit trail issues. Tom Harris stated the SMAC is starting to run out of things. He wondered (looking down the road a bit) if we are not a committee of diminishing value as we move through this process. Is there a point where we will continue to do this, or not to do this, or we will have 6 meetings a year instead of the 11 we have had. Would this be something we would set aside and let the RAC take it over? Will it come to that point? It's worth thinking down the road just to see what we are doing. Members expressed appreciation for Tom Dyer and his staffs' efforts to keep the SMAC informed and willingness to do so.

Submitted by Liz Appelman

The SMAC approved the May 2003 meeting minutes as amended on June 6, 2003.

Certified by:

Tom Harris, SMAC Chair

June 6, 2003

Date